

Public Health Announces 1 Additional Death, 18 Additional Positive Cases in Delaware

SMYRNA (March 29, 2020) – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is announcing one additional fatality related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), and is providing an update on the number of positive cases reported in the state.

In total, six Delawareans have passed away due to complications from COVID-19. The most recent death involves a 79-year-old female from New Castle County who was not hospitalized. The individual had underlying health conditions. The source of exposure is related to travel to a state with positive COVID-19 cases. To protect personal health information, DPH will not disclose additional information about the individual who passed away.

There have been 232 total laboratory-confirmed cases in the state since March 11. This includes 18 additional cases since Saturday. Of the Delawareans diagnosed with COVID-19, 141 are from New Castle County, 25 are from Kent County, and 66 are from Sussex County. The total number of positive cases represents a cumulative total of cases, including individuals who are currently ill, and those who are considered recovered. Nine Delaware residents have recovered from COVID-19. Patients are considered fully recovered seven days after the resolution of their symptoms (three days after symptoms resolve, they are no longer required to self-isolate at home; however, they must continue to practice strict social distancing for the remaining four days).

Of the 232 cases, 114 are male and 118 are female. The

individuals range in age from 1 to 90. Thirty-three individuals are currently hospitalized, nine are critically ill. The source of exposure for many of these positive cases is unknown, which indicates community spread of the virus is occurring in the state. In an effort to provide more demographic information to the public, additional information has been incorporated into Delaware's data dashboard located at de.gov/coronavirus. DPH cannot confirm specific information about any individual case even if other persons or entities disclose it independently.

DPH is also announcing a change in its call center operating hours. Due to a reduced volume of calls, the DPH call center will be open from 8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. It will continue to operate from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday until further notice. The call center number is 1-866-408-1899.

Through the Governor's State of Emergency, Delawareans are to stay home, except if your business has been deemed essential. The Governor's order does allow Delawareans who need to see a doctor, pick up a prescription, buy groceries, or engage in other activities essential to their health to leave their residences. If you are sick with any symptoms, stay home. If you are sick and need essential supplies, ask someone else to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy to get what you need.

If you think you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or have symptoms of illness, make sure to distance yourself from others, particularly vulnerable populations. Older adults and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions – including serious heart conditions, chronic lung conditions, including moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity and those who are immunocompromised, including through cancer treatment – might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

For individuals who are sick, stay home and contact your

primary care provider for guidance regarding symptoms and next steps. DPH urges individuals who are sick, even with mild symptoms that would be present with a cold or flu, to stay home to help prevent the spread of illness to others.

Statewide testing at standing health facility testing sites require a physician's order or prescription to be tested (*Bayhealth patients will be pre-screened via phone without needing to see a provider first). These are not walk-in testing sites. Those without a primary care provider can call the DPH Call Center Line at 1-866-408-1899. Individuals awaiting test results, should wait to hear back from their medical provider. The DPH Call Center does not have test results.

Delawareans with general questions about COVID-19 or their exposure risk can call the Division of Public Health's Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899, or 711 for individuals who are hearing-impaired, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Questions can also be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.